

June 16, 1998

The Honorable Thomas A. Daschle
U.S. Senate
315 Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

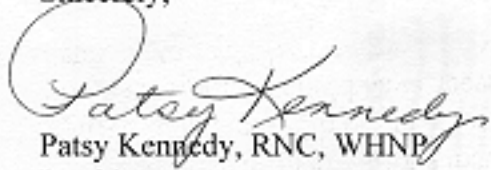
The Honorable Thomas A. Daschle:

The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) is pleased to endorse the Patient's Bill of Rights Act of 1998. AWHONN is an organization of 22,000 health care professionals whose mission is to promote excellence in nursing practice to improve the health and well-being of women and newborns. We support this legislation in its efforts to ensure that individuals are provided essential protections in health insurance.

AWHONN nurses are involved daily in the care of women and infants... we recognize the critical need that will be met through this important legislation. As part of the comprehensive health care services AWHONN nurses provide, we frequently encounter patients that struggle with the coverage rules of their various insurance plans. Women prefer to have an obstetrician, gynecologist, midwife or nurse practitioner as their primary care provider. Additionally, pregnant woman should have access to 24 hour, accessible emergency services and to make the decision to seek these services according to the prudent layperson criteria.

AWHONN supports the concept of the protections outlined in S. 1890, and particularly supports the application of these provisions to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. We look forward to working with you on the passage of this critical legislation.

Sincerely,


Patsy Kennedy, RNC, WHNP
President